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ACTION AF-01INFO LOG-00 OASY-00 TEDE-00 ADS-00 ONY-00 SSO-00 /001W
-----A2BF31 032036Z /38R 031624Z FEB 95
FM AMEMBASSY KIGALI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0125

C O N F I D E N T I A L KIGALI 000376

DEPARTMENT FOR AF/C KEVIN AISTON FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR
TAGS: AMGT
SUBJECT: OFFICIAL-INFORMAL

1. CONFIDENTIAL ENTIRE TEXT.

2. I HAVE BEEN TRYING TO FIGURE OUT WHY TALK OF AN AMNESTY HAS SUDDENLY EMERGED. IT APPEARS THAT IT STEMS FROM TWO SOURCES: STRONG PRESSURE FROM ZAIRE FOR A GENERAL AMNESTY AS PART OF A REFUGEE RETURN AGREEMENT THAT WOULD ENTAIL ZAIRIAM COOPERATION ON BORDER SECURITY AS WELL AS RETURN OF RWANDAN GOVERNMENT GOODS, AND A DISCUSSION IN THE INTER MINISTERIAL GROUP ON UUDAICAL ADMINISTRATION REGARDING PRIORITIES IN THE TRIAL OF PERSONS ACCUSED OF GENOCIDE. IN THE FIRST INSTANCE, THE GOVERNMENT IS BEING ASKED TO LET CRIMINALS OFF FREE -- A NON STARTER. IN THE SECOND INSTANCE, THE GOVERNMENT IS GRAPPLING WITH THE
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: JOHN L MILLS
DATE/CASE ID: 14 MAY 2007 200103014

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POSSIBILITY OF AMNESTY IN A LEGAL SENSE NAMELY, A RELEASE FROM THE SANCTIONS RECEIVED IN JUDGEMENT FOR A CRIME.

3. CLEARLY AMNESTY CAN MEAN MANY THINGS TO MANY PEOPLE, HENCE THE VICE PRESIDENT'S EXTENDED COMMENTARY NOTING THAT WHEN PEOPLE TALK OF AMNESTY THEY SHOULD BE CAREFUL HOW THEY DEFINE IT, LEST CRIMINALS BE GIVEN IMPUNITY. IT WOULD APPEAR THAT TWAGIRAMUNGU WAS DRAWN INTO SOME INFORMAL COMMENTS BASED ON QUESTIONS ABOUT A LIST OF TOP CRIMINALS. HIS REMARKS MAY HAVE REFLECTED SOME OF THE THINKING IN THE INTER-MINISTERIAL MEETINGS.

3. SINCE AMNESTY HAS SUCH LOADED AND AMBIGUOUS MEANING IN THE RWANDAN CONTEXT, IT IS NOT AN IDEA WE SHOULD INCLUDE IN OUR PUBLIC DISCOURSE ON RWANDAN PROBLEMS. THERE IS, HOWEVER, CONSIDERABLE DISCUSSION WITHIN AND WITHOUT GOVERNMENT ON POLITICAL DIALOGUE AND WE MAY WANT TO ENCOURAGE EXPANDED DIALOGUE OR WHAT TONY LAKE CALLED "POLITICAL RECONCILIATION." I WILL HAVE RECOMMENDATIONS AND CAUTIONS ON THAT SCORE IN AN OPEN CHANNEL CABLE. RAWSON

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